ISMAEL

Taleem & Tarbiyyat Magazine for Waqfeen-e-Nau

QUARTERLY | ISSUE #17 | JAN-MAR 2020

مسیح موعود علیہ السلام

FROM THE EDITOR

It is often said that man experiences two types of death; once, when he dies and moves on to the Hereafter and the second, when his name is mentioned for the last time on earth.

In Islam, one of the most motivating factors of keeping your name alive is for seeking God's pleasure.

We all know that we have a limited amount of time on earth, and we are limited, due to that time, to the amount of good deeds we do to ensure God is pleased with us. However, one method of pleasing our Lord and receiving His blessings is to leave behind such works as can help others and thus, become the recipients of their prayers. Ahadith are replete with instructions to pray for the dead, that they may be successful on the Day of Reckoning and please their Lord. In another hadith, we are reminded to visit graveyards often so that we may be reminded of our real duties on earth.

In the Holy Quran, we are told:

وَاَمَّا مَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ فَيَمْكُثُ فِى الْاَرْضِ

"... as to that which benefits man, it stays on the earth." (Surah al-Ra'd, Ch.18: V.13)

Thus, one of our goals should be to leave behind such a legacy that is beneficial for our families, our children, our fellow Ahmadi Muslims and the world at large.

Hazrat Maulvi Nuruddin, Khalifatul Masih I, may Allah be pleased with him, once said: "Neither do those who are more prone to cause harm live in peace, nor do they let others do so. They remain in hell themselves and also make life miserable for others. Therefore, instead of being harmful to others, be beneficial to all.

"The biggest thing that you can do is to manage your time, make use of prayers, forge a bond friendship with the pious and increase in love for pious people. A principle of love is:

جُبِلَتِ الْقُلُوْبُ عَلٰى حُبِّ مَنْ اَحْسَنَ اِلَيْهَا

"[(People's) hearts are made on the love of those who are best with them.] My nature is such that if I ask someone to do something and they do not do it, then my love for that person ceases to remain. The same is the case of God's love. He holds those dearest who remain obedient to Him." (Haqaiq-ul-Furqan, Vol. 2, p. 417)

May Allah enable us to remain loyal to our Creator and may we please Him in every sphere of life. May we leave a legacy for future generations that can benefit them and, ultimately, benefit us. Amin.

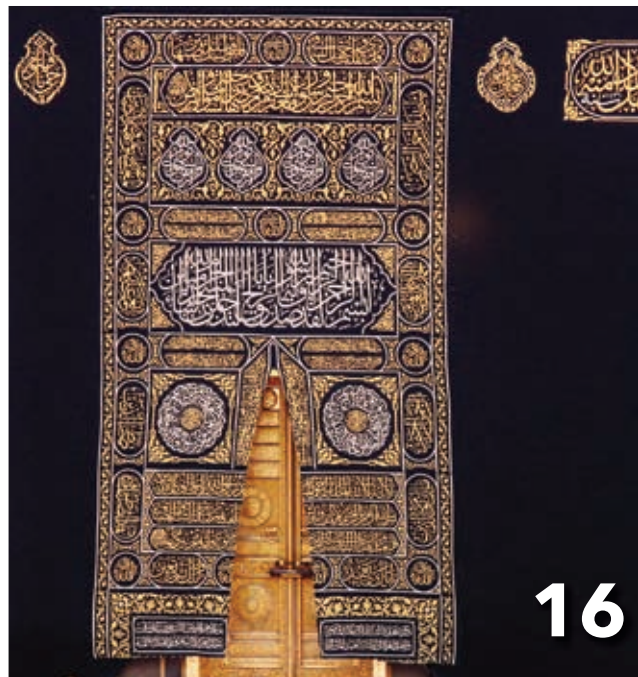
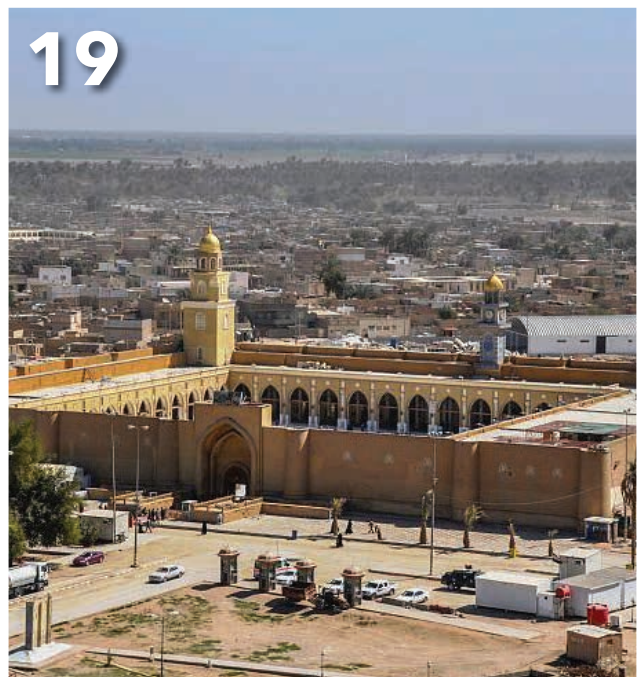
WELCOME TO

ISMAEL MAGAZINE

Quarterly ISSUE #17 JAN-MAR 2020

CONTENTS

12

14

MEET THE TEAM

CONTACT

WAQF-E-NAU (CENTRAL)
22 DEER PARK ROAD,
LONDON. SW19 3TL
(UK)

+44 (0)20 8544 7633

+44 (0)20 8544 7643

manager@ismaelmagazine.org
editorenglish@ismaelmagazine.org
editorurdu@ismaelmagazine.org

www.waqfenauintl.org

اَعُوۡذُ بِاللّٰہِ مِنَ الشَّیۡطَانِ الرَّجِیۡمِ

بِسۡمِ اللّٰہِ الرَّحۡمٰنِ الرَّحِیۡمِ

لَعَلَّکَ بَاخِعٌ نَّفۡسَکَ اَلَّا یَکُوۡنُوۡا مُؤۡمِنِیۡنَ

"Haply thou wilt grieve thyself to death because they believe not."

(Surah al-Shu'ara, Ch.26: V.4)

In his exegesis of the Holy Quran, Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih II, may Allah be pleased with him, states:

"When Hazrat Ali[ra] accepted Islam, he was still just a child, but he accepted Islam with the realisation that he would have to bear all hardships and difficulties for the sake of Islam, so much so that, if required, he would have to offer his life for God Almighty.

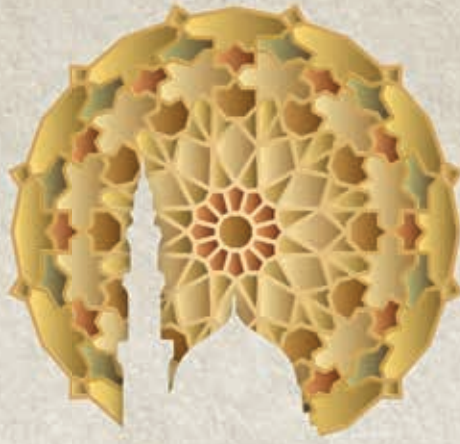
"It is narrated in a hadith that in the early days of his prophethood, the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, invited Banu Abdul Muttalib for a meal so that he could convey to them the message of Islam. Many relatives of the Holy Prophet[sa] also attended the dinner.

"When everyone had eaten, the Holy Prophet[sa] stood up to deliver his message, but Abu Lahab sent all the participants away and thus, they all left for their homes without listening to what the Holy Prophet[sa] had to say.

"They Holy Prophet[sa] was very surprised that he had invited all those people to a meal and they still did not listen to what he had to say. But the Holy Prophet[sa] was not disheartened, rather he instructed Hazrat Ali[ra] to invite them again. Hence, arrangements for another meal were made all over again.

"On the following occasion, once they had all eaten to their full, the Holy Prophet[sa] stood up and said, 'Look at what a great favour Allah has done upon you that He has sent His Prophet among you. I call you to the One God. If you accept what I have to say, then you will inherit spiritual and worldly blessings. Is there anyone among you who will help me in this mission?'

"There was complete pin-drop silence in the gathering. Then from one corner, a young child stood up and said, 'I am a very weak person and the youngest among those present here, but I vow to support you.' This young child was Hazrat Ali[ra], who announced his support for Islam."

(Tafsir-e-Kabir, Vol. 7, pp. 24-25)

اَللّٰھُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰی مُحَمَّدٍ وَّ عَلٰٓی اٰلِ مُحَمَّدٍ کَمَا صَلَّیْتَ عَلٰٓی اِبْرَاھِیْمَ وَ عَلٰٓی اٰلِ اِبْرَاھِیْمَ اِنَّکَ حَمِیْدٌ مَّجِیْدٌ
اَللّٰھُمَّ بَارِکْ عَلٰی مُحَمَّدٍ وَّ عَلٰٓی اٰلِ مُحَمَّدٍ کَمَا بَارَکْتَ عَلٰٓی اِبْرَاھِیْمَ وَ عَلٰٓی اٰلِ اِبْرَاھِیْمَ اِنَّکَ حَمِیْدٌ مَّجِیْدٌ

وَعَنْ أَبِیْ سَعِیْدٍ الخُدْرِی رَضِیَ اللهُ عَنْهُ أَنَّ رَسُوْلَ اللهِ صَلّی اللهُ عَلَیْهِ وَسلَّمَ قَالَ:
"مَنْ رَضی بِاللهِ رَبًّا وَبِالْإِسْلَامِ دِیْنًا، وَبِمُحَمَّدٍ رَسُوْلًا وَجبتْ لَهُ الجَنَّة"
فَعَجَبَ لَهَا أَبُوْ سَعِیْد فَقَالَ أعدهَا علی یَا رَسُوْلَ الله فَأَعَادَهَا عَلَیْهِ ثُمَّ
قَالَ: "وَأخرى یَرفع الله بِهَا العبْد مِائَة دَرَجَة فِی الجَنَّةِ، مَا بیْنَ کل
دَرَجتَیْن، کَمَا بَینَ السَّماءِ وَالْأَرْض" ۔قَالَ: وَمَا هِیَ یَا رَسُوْلَ الله؟ قَالَ:
"الْجِهَادُ فِیْ سَبِیْلِ اللهِ، الْجِهَادُ فِیْ سَبِیْلِ اللهِ".

Hazrat Abu Saeed al-Khudri, may Allah be pleased with him, said that

The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said:
"Paradise becomes incumbent for a person who is pleased with Allah as his Lord, with Islam as his faith and with Muhammad as the Messenger." Hazrat Abu Saeed[ra] was pleased with this and requested the Holy Prophet[sa] to repeat it. He repeated it and added, "There is something else by which Allah exalts a servant a hundred grades in Paradise, the distance between any two grades being like the distance between heaven and earth." Hazrat Abu Saeed[ra] asked: "What is that, O Messenger of Allah?" He answered, "Striving in the cause of Allah, striving in the cause of Allah."

(Sahih Muslim)

THE WORK OF PROPHETS IN PROVING GOD'S UNITY

A close study of all the Scriptures revealed by God Almighty shows that all the Prophets have admonished the same thing: believe in God Almighty to be One without partner and, along with it, also believe in God's Messengers. This is why the gist of Islamic teaching was taught to all of the ummah in these two sentences:

لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُوْلُ اللّٰہ

["There is no God but Allah. Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah"].

It should also be borne in mind that it is only the Prophets, peace be on them, who demonstrate the existence of God and teach people that He is the One without any partner. If these holy ones had not appeared in the world, it would have been an implausible and impossible matter to find the straight path with certainty. Though a person of pure nature and sound mind can, by reflecting on the earth and heaven and observing their perfect and firm order, conclude that there ought to be a Creator of this work full of wisdom; but, there is a great difference between the statement that "there ought to be [a Creator]" and "He really does exist".

(Haqiqatul Wahi [The Philosophy of Divine Revelation], p. 133)

Love for the Holy Prophet Muhammad[sa] and the importance of Durood

Azhar Goraya

Missionary of the Ahmadiyya Jamaat in Mexico

Azhar Goraya graduated from Jamia Canada in 2014. He chose to be a missionary as he is part of the Waqf-e-Nau scheme. He had developed an interest in the writings of the Promised Messiah, peace be upon him, which encouraged him to pursue this line of education. He is currently serving as a missionary in Mexico.

Islam is a perfect religion, one that guides us in every matter of life. It teaches us that to be a true Muslim, one must have sincere love for the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.

The Holy Quran states:

"Say, if your fathers, and your sons, and your brethren, and your wives, and your kinsfolk, and the wealth you have acquired, and the trade whose dullness you fear, and the dwellings which you love are dearer to you than Allah and His Messenger and striving in His cause, then wait until Allah comes with His judgment; and Allah guides not the disobedient people." (Surah al-Taubah, Ch.9; V.24)

The Prophet Muhammad[sa] also highlighted the necessity of having love for the Messenger[sa] of Allah.

Hazrat Anas, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said:

"None of you will have faith until they love me more than their father, their children and all mankind." *(Sahih al-Bukhari,* Kitab al-Iman, Bab Hubbur-Rasul sallallahu alaihi wa sallam minal-iman)

It is necessary to love the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa} more than our own lives. There is an interesting narration about Hazrat Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, that sheds light on this aspect of faith.

Hazrat Abdullah bin Hisham, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated, "We were with the Prophet^{sa} and he was holding the hand of Umar^{ra} bin al-Khattab. Umar^{ra} said to him, 'O Allah's Messenger^{sa}! You are dearer to me than everything except my own self.' The Prophet^{sa} said, 'No, by Him in Whose Hand my soul is, [you will not have complete faith] until I am dearer to you than your own self.' Then Umar^{ra} said to him, 'However, now, by Allah, you are dearer to me than my own self.' The Prophet^{sa} said, 'Now, O Umar, [now you are a believer].'" (*Sahih al-Bukhari,* Kitab al-Iman wa al-Nudhur, Bab Kaifa kanat yamin al-Nabi sallallahu alaihi wa sallam)

We should therefore increase our knowledge about the life of the Holy Prophet^{sa}. Based on that knowledge, we should inculcate in ourselves love, honour and respect for the Holy Prophet^{sa} in our hearts, which is a requirement of our faith.

To truly send Durood, we must be conscious of the rank and honour that Allah granted the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa}.

The Promised Messiah^{as} stated:

"Thus, I always wonder what a sublime Prophet this Arabian Prophet is, whose name is Muhammad (thousands upon thousands of blessings and peace be upon him). One cannot fathom the limit of his sublime status and it is not given to man to estimate the extent of his spiritual effectiveness. It is a pity that his rank has not been recognised as it should have been.

"He is the champion who restored to the world the Tauhid [unity of God] which had disappeared from the world; he loved God to the extreme and his soul melted to the extreme out of sympathy for mankind.

"Therefore, God, who knew the secret of his heart, exalted him above all the Prophets and all the first ones and the last ones and bestowed upon him all that he desired within his lifetime. It is he who is the fountainhead of every grace, and anyone who claims any superiority without acknowledging his grace is not a human being but is the spawn of Satan, because he (the Holy Prophet^{sa}) has been bestowed the key to every exaltation and he has been given the treasure house of every understanding. He who does not receive through him is deprived forever.

"I am nothing and possess nothing. What am I and what do I amount to? I would be ungrateful if I were not to confess that I have found true Tauhid through this very Prophet. I have attained the recognition of the Living God through this same perfect Prophet and through his light. The honour of converse and communion with God, through which I behold His countenance, has been bestowed upon me through the same Great Prophet. *(Haqiqatul-Wahi,* The Philosophy of Divine revelation, pp. 137-138 [2018])

The Prophet Muhammad^{sa} is an "excellent model" of Islamic teachings. His life was based upon high moral principles, and the Quran has in many places mandated Muslims to follow his example.

The Quran tells us the following about the Prophet Muhammad^{sa}:

"And thou dost surely possess high moral excellences." (Surah al-Qalam, Ch.68: V.5)

He demonstrated these high moral qualities in all parts of his life, to both friend and foe. So high was the rank of the Prophet Muhammad^{sa}, that Allah granted him many distinctions that he did not grant any other prophet. It is only for the Holy Prophet^{sa} that Allah has declared in the Holy Quran:

"Allah and His angels send blessings on the Prophet. O ye who believe! you also should invoke blessings on him and salute him with the salutation of peace." (Surah al-Ahzab, Ch.33: V.57]

That is Allah himself declares that he sends blessings on this prophet and has instructed every believer to seek blessings for him as well until the Day of Judgement.

Why has He told us to invoke Durood? One of the reasons is that Prophet Muhammad^{sa} is so beloved to Allah, that those who send blessings on him will be blessed by Allah, much like how

if a person loves a small child, eventually the parents of that child will also begin to love that person.

We should send blessings upon him, keeping in mind his high status and the great pains and lengths he went to teach us Islam and with a realisation that even now it is only possible to come closer to Allah if we have love for him in our heart and follow his footsteps.

The Promised Messiah[as] wrote in one place about why we should love the Holy Prophet[sa] in the following words:

"Just reflect upon the sincerity and devotion of our Chief and Master, Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. The Holy Prophet[sa] stood firm against all forms of evil. He bore diverse trials and tribulations, but did not care in the least. It was this sincerity and devotion which moved Allah the Exalted to shower His grace. It is for this reason that He states:

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ وَمَلٰٓئِكَتَهٗ يُصَلُّوْنَ عَلَى النَّبِيِّ ؕ
يٰٓاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا صَلُّوْا عَلَيْهِ وَسَلِّمُوْا تَسْلِيْمًا

"Translation: 'Allah Almighty and all His angels send blessings upon the Messenger. O ye who believe! You also should invoke blessings and peace upon the Prophet[sa].' This verse establishes that the deeds of the Noble Messenger[sa] were such that Allah Almighty did not use any specific word to praise them or outline his attributes. Although words could be found, God Himself chose not to use any in particular.

"For the pious deeds of the Holy Prophet[sa] were beyond the confines of praise. A verse of this nature does not exist in praise of any other Prophet. The soul of the Holy Prophet[sa] was imbibed with such sincerity and purity, and his deeds were so praiseworthy in the sight of God that Allah the Almighty decreed for all times to come that all future generations would send blessings upon the Holy Prophet[sa] as an expression of gratitude." (*Malfuzat,* Vol. 1, pp. 36-37 [2018])

How do we invoke blessings on the Holy Prophet[sa]? When this verse was revealed, the Companions[ra] of the Holy Prophet[sa] had the very same question. It is narrated in a hadith:

Hazrat Abdur Rahman bin Abi Laila, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that Hazrat Kaab bin Ujrah met him and said, "Shall I not give you a present that I got from the Prophet?" Hazrat Abdur Rahman[ra] said, "Yes, give it to me." He was told, "We asked Allah's Messenger[sa] saying, 'O Allah's Messenger! How should one (ask Allah to) send blessings on you, the members of the family, for Allah has taught us how to salute you (in the prayer)?' He replied, Say:

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ وَّعَلٰٓى اٰلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ
عَلٰٓى اِبْرَاهِيْمَ وَعَلٰٓى اٰلِ اِبْرَاهِيْمَ اِنَّكَ حَمِيْدٌ مَّجِيْدٌ
اَللّٰهُمَّ بَارِكْ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ وَّعَلٰٓى اٰلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا بَارَكْتَ
عَلٰٓى اِبْرَاهِيْمَ وَعَلٰٓى اٰلِ اِبْرَاهِيْمَ اِنَّكَ حَمِيْدٌ مَّجِيْدٌ

"O Allah! Send Your mercy on Muhammad and on the family of Muhammad, as You sent Your Mercy on Abraham and on the family of Abraham, for You are the Most Praiseworthy, the Most Glorious. O Allah! Send Your blessings on Muhammad and the family of Muhammad, as You sent your Blessings on Abraham and on the family of Abraham, for You are the Most praiseworthy, the Most Glorious."'" (*Sahih al-Bukhari*, Kitab Ahadith al-Anbiya, Hadith 3370)

This prayer is known as "Durood Sharif" or "Assalaatu alan-Nabi". To recite this prayer is an essential part of our faith.

Under the conditions of Bai'at outlined by the Promised Messiah[as], the third condition states:

"That he/she shall regularly offer the five daily prayers in accordance with the commandments of God and the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him); and shall try his/her best to be regular in offering the Tahajud (pre-dawn supererogatory prayers) and invoking Durood (blessings) on the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him); that he/she shall make it his/her daily routine to ask forgiveness for his/her sins, to remember the bounties of God and to praise and glorify Him."

The Durood that we send upon the Prophet

Muhammad[sa] should be heartfelt. The Promised Messiah[as] stated in a letter to one of his companions:

"Stay intensely focused in invoking Durood and seek blessings for the Holy Prophet[sa] with the same sincerity and discernment with which one seeks blessings for a dear one. Seek this with great humility and there should be no pretense in this humility and prayer, rather pray for the Holy Prophet[sa] with the spirit of true friendship and love. Seek those blessings with a sincere heart and soul for the Holy Prophet[sa] which are inherent in Durood. It is a sign of personal love that one never tires, is not disheartened and invokes Durood with no involvement of vested interests and only recites it for Divine blessings for the Holy Prophet[sa]. (*Maktubaat-e-Ahmad*, Vol. 1, pp. 534-535)

There are many blessings associated with the act of Durood. We should be conscious of them and consequently feel even more inclined towards reciting this prayer to better our relationship with Allah.

We should not think that offering Durood Sharif is in some way necessary for the Holy Prophet[sa]. It is in fact to help us that Allah has taught us to pray for him. The Holy Prophet[sa] once stated:

"O people, on the Day of Judgement, those who will be most worthy of salvation from its fear and risks will be those who sent the most Durood upon me during their lives. Certainly, the blessings of Allah and His angels was sufficient for me as is mentioned in the verse, 'Certainly Allah and His angels call down blessings on the Prophet'. But Allah ordered the believers to do so as well so that they may be rewarded because of it. (*Kanzul Ummal*, Al-kitab al-thani min harfil-hamza)

The Prophet Muhammad[sa] admonished those that were not in the habit of sending Durood upon him.

Hazrat Ali bin Abi Talib, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said:

"The stingy person is the one before whom I am mentioned, and he does not send Salat upon me." (*Jamey' al-Tirmidhi*, Kitab al-da'waat an Rasulillah sallallahu alaihi wa sallam)

Durood Sharif is an essential part of our daily prayers. It is a necessary part of the acceptance of prayers.

It is mentioned in a hadith that Hazrat Fazalah bin Ubaid, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated:

"While the Messenger[sa] of Allah was seated, a man entered, performed Salat and said, 'O Allah, forgive me, and have mercy upon me.' The Messenger[sa] of Allah said, 'You have rushed, O praying person. When you perform Salat and then sit, then praise Allah with what He is deserving of, and send Salat upon me, then call upon Him.'"

He carried on by saying:

"Then another man performed Salat after that, so he praised Allah and sent Salat upon the Prophet[sa]. The Prophet[sa] said to him, 'O praying person! Supplicate, and you shall be answered.'" (*Jamey' al-Tirmidhi,* Kitab al-da'waat an Rasulillah sallallahu alaihi wa sallam)

The Day of Judgement will be a day when there shall be no refuge other than the refuge of Allah. Many will be honoured and many will be abased. The Holy Prophet[sa] guaranteed that the person who is most regular in offering Durood will be closest to him on the Day of Judgement, and therefore safe from the calamity of that day.

Hazrat Abdullah bin Masud, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that the Prophet of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said:

"The person closest to me on the Day of Judgement is the one who sent the most Salat [blessings] upon me." (*Jamey' al-Tirmidhi*, Abwab al-Witr)

Durood Sharif is also a way to gain blessings, wipe out our faults and elevate our spiritual rank:

Hazrat Anas bin Malik, may Allah be pleased with him, said that the Prophet of Allah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said:

"Whoever sends Salat [blessings] upon me once, Allah will send Salat upon him tenfold, and will

erase ten sins from him, and will raise him ten degrees in status." *(Sunan al-Nasai*, Kitab al-Sahw, Bab al-fazl fis-salah alan-Nabi sallallahu alaihi wa sallam)

The Promised Messiah[as] was a witness to the great blessings linked with Durood. He wrote in one place:

"I recall that one night, this humble one recited Durood Sharif [calling down blessings on the Holy Prophet[sa]] so abundantly that my heart and soul became fragrant therewith. The same night, I saw in a dream that people were carrying into the house of this humble one waterskins filled with divine light in the form of pure water and one of them said, 'These are the very blessings which you had sent to Muhammad, may peace and blessings of Allah be upon him.'" *(Barahin-e-Ahmadiyya – Part Four,* pp. 378-379)

How much Durood should we offer? The more Durood we offer, the more Allah will Himself take care of our affairs and the more He will forgive us.

Hazrat al-Tufail bin Ubayy bin Kaab, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated from his father who said that once, when a third of the night had passed, the Messenger[sa] of Allah stood and said:

"O you people! Remember Allah! Remember Allah! The Rajifah is coming, followed by the Radifah, death and what it brings is coming, death and what it brings is coming!" Ubayy said, "O Messenger of Allah! Indeed, I say frequent Salat for you. How much of my Salat should I make for you?" He said, "As you wish." He asked, "A fourth?" He replied, "As you wish. But if you add more, it would be better for you." He asked, "Then half?" He replied, "As you wish. And if you add more it would be better [for you]." He asked, "Two-thirds then?" "He replied, "As you wish, but if you add more it would be better for you." He asked, "Should I make all of my Salat for you?" He replied, "Then your problems would be solved and your sins would be forgiven." *(Jamey' al-Tirmidhi*, Kitab sifatul-qiyamah wa al-raqaiq wal-war' an Rasulillah sallallahu alaihi wa sallam)

Durood Sharif is thus an essential part of the life of a Muslim. There is no other person upon whom so many blessings are sent, and as a result of which so many blessings are reaped.

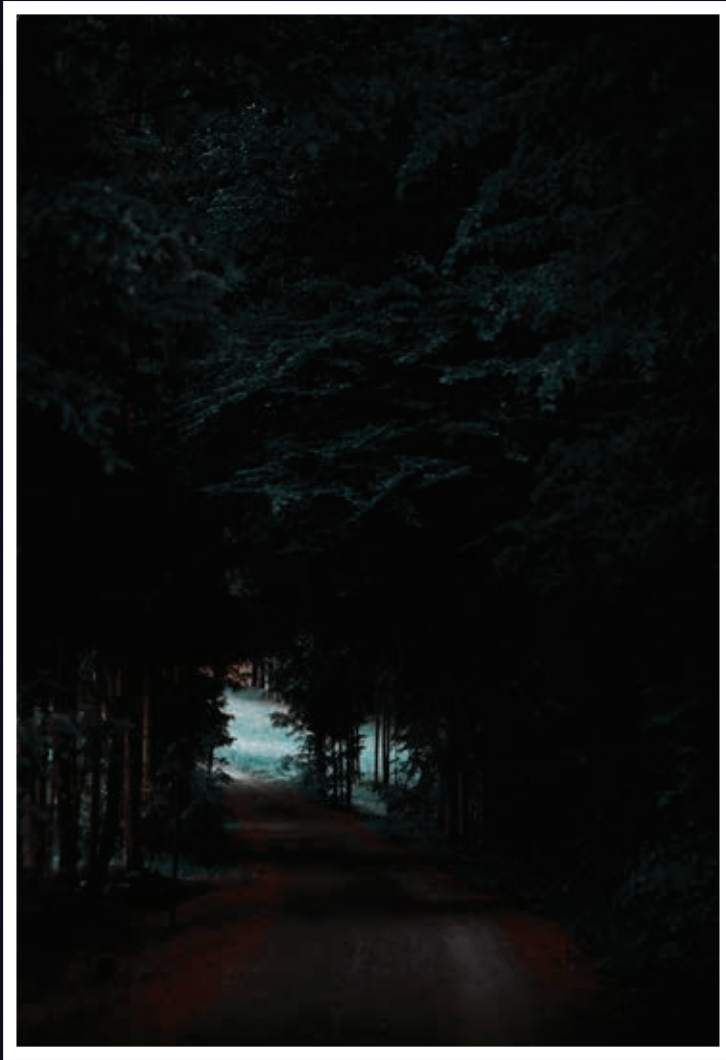
The Promised Messiah[as] writes:

"The man who in his being and his attributes and his actions and through his spiritual and holy faculties set an example of perfection, in knowledge and action and in sincerity and steadfastness, and was called the perfect man was Muhammad [peace and blessings of Allah be on him]. ...

"The man who was most perfect as man and as Prophet, and came with full blessings, and who through a spiritual revival and resurrection manifested the first Judgement in the world and revived the dead world, that blessed Prophet, the Seal of the Prophets, the leader of the righteous ones, the pride of the Prophets, was Muhammad, the chosen one [peace and blessings of Allah be on him].

"Our Lord, send down on that beloved Prophet that mercy and blessing that Thou hast not sent down on anyone since the beginning of the world. Had that grand Prophet not appeared in the world then we would have no proof of the truth of lesser Prophets like Jonah, Job, Jesus son of Mary, Malachi, John, Zechariah, etc. "Though they were favourites and honoured and were beloved ones of Almighty God, they are under obligation to this Prophet that they were accepted in the world as true Prophets.

"O Allah, send down Thy blessings on him and on his people and on his companions, all of them. Our last word is that all praise belongs to Allah, Lord of the worlds. *(Itmam-ul-Hujjah, Ruhani Khazain, Vol. 8, p. 308; Essence of Islam, Vol. 1, p. 199)*

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ وَّ عَلٰى اٰلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ
عَلٰى اِبْرَاهِيْمَ وَ عَلٰى اٰلِ اِبْرَاهِيْمَ اِنَّكَ حَمِيْدٌ مَّجِيْدٌ
اَللّٰهُمَّ بَارِكْ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ وَّ عَلٰى اٰلِ مُحَمَّدٍ كَمَا بَارَكْتَ
عَلٰى اِبْرَاهِيْمَ وَ عَلٰى اٰلِ اِبْرَاهِيْمَ اِنَّكَ حَمِيْدٌ مَّجِيْدٌ

PRIDE LEADS ONE TO FORGET GOD

عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ رضىَ الله عَنْهُ قَالَ، قَالَ رَسُولُ اللّٰهِ صلّى الله عليه وسلم:

"أَنَا سَيِّدُ وَلَدِ آدَمَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَلاَ فَخْرَ وَبِيَدِى لِوَاءُ الْحَمْدِ وَلاَ فَخْرَ وَمَا مِنْ نَبِيٍّ

يَوْمَئِذٍ آدَمُ فَمَنْ سِوَاهُ إِلاَّ تَحْتَ لِوَائِي وَأَنَا أَوَّلُ مَنْ تَنْشَقُّ عَنْهُ الأَرْضُ وَلاَ فَخْرَ"

Hazrat Abu Saeed, may Allah be pleased with him, narrated that the Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said:

"I am the master of the children of Adam on the Day of Judgement and this is not a boast. The Banner of Praise will be in my hand and this is no boast. There will not be a prophet on that day – neither Adam nor anyone other than him – except that he will be under my banner. And I am the first one for whom the earth will be opened for and this is not a boast." (*Jamey' al-Tirmidhi,* Kitab al-Manaqib 'an-Rasulillah Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam)

With regard to this subject, Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih II and Musleh-e-Maud, may Allah be pleased with him, said:

"It is said in the Ahadith that once, the Holy Prophet,

peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, mentioned one of his superiorities, followed by the words, 'I do not boast.' This was another way of saying, 'The reason is that this blessing was granted to me by God Alone.' This shows that a true believer, no matter how successful they become, refrain from arrogance as they are aware that the cause of pride was not a result of their own effort but Allah's blessing. Non-believers, however, do not practice this.

"Thus, whenever a person experiences prosperity and they take pride in their success or their respect or their wealth or their power, then it becomes inevitable that God's existence becomes hidden from them and the person thinks that the success was a result of their own doing. Affluence causes a person to first forget God's blessings upon them and then, to forget God's existence altogether.

"For a person who cries out, 'I am big' and 'I am great', it is impossible to recognise anything greater than them. Otherwise, can such a person face the sun and say that their flame is much stronger? During the evenings, such people can undoubtedly take pride in their lamps, but not during the day. And if a person does take pride in their light during the day, then it means that the sun has become hidden from them. Otherwise, how can it be that whilst seeing the sun, they pride over their flame?

"In the same way, when a person deems themselves to be great, there can be no reason for such a belief other than the fact that God becomes hidden from them; thus, as a result of prosperity, the reasons of pride i.e. the attributes of God become hidden from them and then gradually, the existence of God ceases to remain in the person's eyes. Thus, the meaning of:

اَلْهٰكُمُ التَّكَاثُرُ

[Mutual rivalry in (seeking worldly) increase diverts you] is as follows:

اَلْهٰكُمُ التَّكَاثُرُ عَنْ صِفَاتِ اللّٰهِ وَعَنِ اللّٰهِ

[Mutual rivalry in (seeking worldly) increase diverts you from the attributes of Allah and from the existence Allah]. (Tafsir-e-Kabir, Vol. 9, p. 526 [under verse 2 of Surah al-Takathur)

HOW TO READ BOOKS OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH[AS]

In light of an answer given by Hazrat Amirul Momineen, Khalifatul Masih V, may Allah strengthen his hand

Question: Reading Ruhani Khazain [compilation of books of the Promised Messiah, peace be upon him] from the beginning is a bit difficult. What can we read before that?

Answer: You should start with *Malfuzat*. It has various topics and sayings, so you should read that. But if your Urdu is not good and your English is better, then there is a collection of the Promised Messiah's[as] writings in English on various topics. It is called *Essence of Islam* and has five volumes. You should read that so that you may understand it in English. If you know Urdu, then you can start with *Malfuzat*, followed by *Haqiqatul Wahi*, which is in the 22nd volume. It is slightly easier to understand as compared to earlier books. The books in the first few volumes are difficult and the ones towards the end are a bit easier, so you should start by reading those.

(Gulshan-e-Waqf-e-Nau, 31 January 2016)

BLESSINGS OF TABLIGH (CALLING UNTO ALLAH) A PERSONAL ACCOUNT

EAKEN AHMED

Eaken Ahmed is a college student currently studying in New York, USA and aspires to serve the Jamaat as a lawyer.

The Holy Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, prophesied that the Imam Mahdi and the Promised Messiah, peace be upon him, would come in the latter days during a time where the Muslims would desperately need help from Allah.

Through him, the Divine system of Khilafat would be reestablished and Islam would see its glory once again. As we know, Allah fulfilled this promise through the person of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, peace be on him, the founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat.

Since the establishment of the Jamaat on 23 March 1889, the community has spread in more than 200 countries of the world. Despite the Jamaat's amazing growth, there are still millions who remain unaware of the advent of Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad, peace be on him. That is why, it is the need of the hour that Ahmadi Muslim men and women partake in tabligh, the propagation of the true Islam.

Alhamdolillah, at a very young age, I developed a passion for tabligh. I remember my first experience doing tabligh in the heart of New York City. A representative was sent from Ohio, Brother Hanan, whose goal was to distribute 1,000 flyers.

He arrived at the mosque during the evening. We took the subway from Brooklyn to Manhattan and placed a stall in the middle of Times Square. Brother Hanan gave me a sign that read "Meet a Muslim". I walked around the city with the sign, attracting attention from tourists and locals. There were people who asked me questions about Islam, some which I could answer and others which I could not.

The experience was highly motivating. The best thing for

me was that I enjoyed distributing flyers, talking to the public and representing my faith. I did not feel like I was doing tabligh as a chore, but with true love and passion.

A more recent tabligh experience showed me that tabligh is the need of the hour and people are desperate in search to find God and religion. I attended a Catholic high school, where most students were part of the Catholic faith and there were only a handful of Muslims. Being an Ahmadi Muslim, I knew that it was my responsibility to act in a manner where I could stand out in a positive way.

One of the students in my school approached me and my brother and asked if we were Muslim. The student's name is Shemar Latty. He was well known in the school and is a prominent basketball player. We responded, "Yes, why do you ask?" Shemar told us that he was raised as a Catholic, but was very confused with his religion. He told us he had been doing researching on Islam, but he still had many questions. My brother and I decided to give Shemar the proper resources to help him better understand Islam.

We took Shemar to the mosque and gave him a tour and explained the fundamental principles and beliefs of Islam and in specific, about Ahmadiyyat. Shemar said that he felt a sense of peace at the mosque and his experience was life changing. I also gave Shemar literature, articles and videos to help him in his research.

When Shemar started to feel more comfortable about Islam Ahmadiyyat, my brother and I organised a meeting with our local missionary, Mahmud Kauser Sahib, to clear any questions or doubts that Shemar had.

The meeting was amazing and Shemar decided that he wanted to join the Jamaat, Alhamdolillah.

Shemar is taking steps now to learn more about Islam Ahamdiyyat and trying to adopt the habits of a true Ahmadi Muslim.

This was a faith-inspiring event that motivated me to continue doing tabligh. I understood that people, even at a young age, are spiritually lost and struggle to build a relationship with God because they lack true guidance. Shemar is one example of the billions of people who are in need of Islam Ahmadiyyat, and it is only through us Ahmadi Muslims that they can be shown the truth.

Throughout my time doing tabligh, I learned that the prayers of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih, may Allah be his Helper, are so powerful and writing to beloved Huzoor[aa] is necessary in expecting results from our tabligh efforts.

An incident comes to mind where the prayers of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih[aa] brought fruitful results in a tabligh initiative.

The national tabligh department of the United States started a campaign called "Coffee Cake and True Islam". The initiative was to invite local neighbours to have a discussion on Islam over coffee and cake. In my local Jamaat, I was assigned to take charge of this programme. For weeks I spent money on advertisements, organised flyer distribution and prayed that we would receive guests at the event. Our efforts were to no avail.

A brother from the national tabligh department advised me that I should write to beloved Huzoor[aa] for prayers. I immediately wrote a letter to Huzoor[aa] requesting prayers for an increased attendance in our weekly Coffee Cake and True Islam event.

At our next event, we received three guests. We had a fruitful discussion and exchanged contacts for future meetings. Throughout the entire meeting, I was stuck with the thought that after weeks of advertising and distributing flyers, we received no guests, but after writing just one letter to beloved Huzoor[aa] we received three guests.

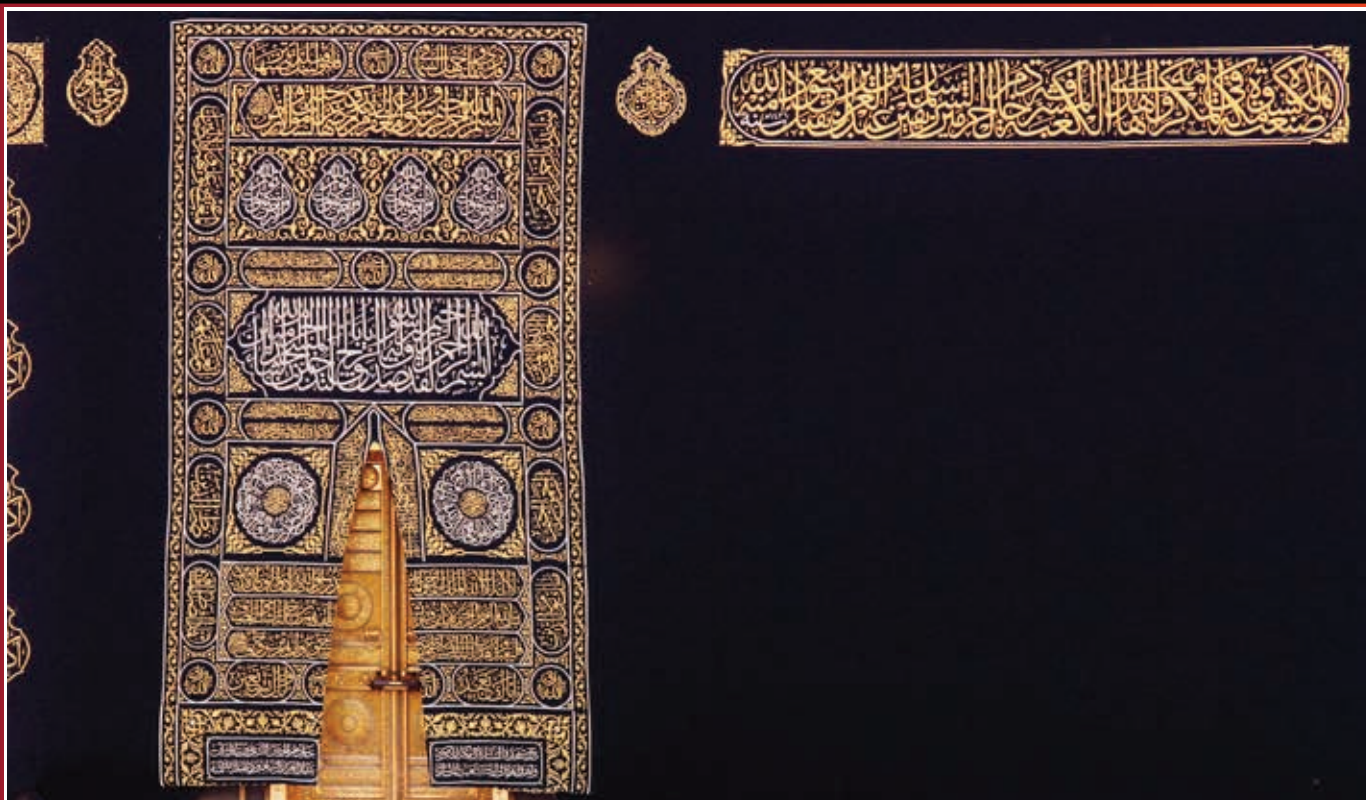
The prayers of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih[aa] are so powerful. Allah listens to all the prayers of our beloved Khalifa and without his prayers, we will be deprived of the blessings that Khilafat has to offer.

In a speech at the 124th Jalsa Salana Qadian, Maulana Mubashir Ahmad Kahlon Sahib, Mufti-e-Silsila Ahmadiyya, stated:

"One of our elders, Hazrat Maulvi Abdul Malik Sahib used to narrate that the day Hazrat Masih-e-Maud, peace be upon him, passed away, he would start seeing divine visions. He saw one companion in a vision, namely Mian Ghulam Rasul, who had died and who he met him in a vision.

"He (Hazrat Maulvi Abdul Malik Sahib) asked him, 'Mian Ghulam Rasul, you have died and attended the court of Allah and you have spoken to Allah. Tell me, when an Ahmadi dies, what questions does Allah ask him?' The companion replied, 'When an Ahmadi dies, Allah asks him two things. Firstly, whether we performed tabligh and secondly, whether we offered Chanda? If the Ahmadi replies in the affirmative, then Allah permits us entry into paradise.'"

Hearing this incident showed me how much Allah wants us to do tabligh. I made a promise to myself that I would always prioritise tabligh in my life and never shy away in moments where I have a chance to represent my faith.

May Allah enable each and every Ahmadi Muslim man and woman to understand the importance of tabligh and passionately partake in it. Amin.

SIGNIFICANCE OF SERVICE TO ISLAM

Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih II
and Musleh-e-Maud, may Allah be pleased with him

During his Khilafat, Hazrat Umar, may Allah be pleased with him, once went to Mecca for Hajj. When he had completed the pilgrimage, just as is customary among us to congratulate one another on Eid, one day, powerful chieftains came to congratulate him and convey their Salam. Hazrat Umar[ra] was seated in a relatively small room. Huge halls did not exist at that time that could seat vast amounts of people. With only a few people, such rooms would get filled up. Hazrat Umar[ra] belonged to a family that were experts in remembering ancestries and who were able to distinguish the families people belonged to. At the time, chieftains belonging to the progeny of the disbelievers of Mecca came to visit him. They came with the belief that as Hazrat Umar[ra] was familiar with their lineages and how respected their fathers and grandfathers were, they would be afforded special treatment as compared with other visitors.

Thus, Hazrat Umar[ra] extended due respect to them, sat them beside him and spoke to them on various matters. After some time, a new Muslim servant arrived. Hazrat Umar[ra] asked the chieftains to move down and make room for the person who had just arrived. They moved back and Hazrat Umar[ra] sat the servant down beside him. Hazrat Umar[ra] then began to talk to him. After a short period, another new Muslim servant came and Hazrat Umar[ra] again asked everyone to move back and make space for him. When that person sat down, a third new Muslim servant came, followed by a fourth, then a fifth and in this manner, seven new Muslim servants came and sat down. On the arrival of every such new Muslim, Hazrat Umar[ra] would ask everyone to

move down to make space.
It seems as if through this incident, Allah wanted to show to the chieftains that all respect and reverence now lay in the service to Islam; belonging to an influential family could not make someone more deserving of respect.
As the chieftains moved down to accommodate the new Muslim servants, they eventually reached the area where people had taken their shoes off. Upon observing the situation, they said to one another, "Do you see how we have been humiliated today?" Then they expressed their disappointment, saying, "We did not expect this of Umar. Umar knows full well how esteemed our families are. How unfortunate that he neglected our respect and preferred the servants over us."
A slightly more intelligent one among them said in response to hearing all this, "What are you saying? Do you not think how Umar is not to blame in this? This is our own fault! Muhammad Rasulullah, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, came into the world and repeatedly urged people to accept him, but our forefathers repeatedly rejected him and subjected him to the cruellest of treatment. If we have to suffer the consequences, then how is Umar to blame? Our forefathers rejected Muhammad Rasulullah[sa], while these servants accepted him and offered every sacrifice for the sake of Islam. For this reason, the servants have been given preference over us this day. If our forefathers made sacrifices for the sake of Islam, then we too would be afforded respect. They did not even accept Islam, let alone offer sacrifices for Islam, so how can we complain as to why they were given more respect than us."
They replied, "That is true, but my question is, how can we rectify this humiliation?" One of them said, "Come, let us pose this very question to Hazrat Umar."
Therefore, they went to Hazrat Umar[ra] again. The congregation had dispersed and the companions had returned to their homes. The chieftains asked Hazrat Umar[ra], "You are aware of what we experienced today. We have come to ask you regarding it." Hazrat Umar[ra] was fully aware of their previous glory and splendour and how well respected their forefathers were. As they said this, Hazrat Umar's eyes began to flood with tears. He replied, "I was helpless. Those servants accepted Muhammad Rasulullah[sa] when the entire world was opposed to him. They are those who endured great hardships for the sake of Islam. When God has given them respect in Islam, then it is my obligation to seat them with reverence."
They replied, "We have come to you with the knowledge that you are not to blame for this. This is our own fault. The servants truly deserved the respect you showed them. However, the question we have is, how can we atone the humiliation that has been branded on our foreheads."
Hazrat Umar[ra] became so emotional on hearing this question that he could not get his words out and so, he gestured in the direction of Syria. At the time, Muslim forces were fighting the qaisar in Syria and with his gesture, Hazrat Umar[ra] meant that if they participated in this battle and sacrificed their lives for the sake of Islam, then maybe their previous sins could be atoned.
The young chiefs understood the gesture and immediately left. They got on their camels and proceeded towards the battlefront. History tells us that none of them returned alive. All of them lost their lives in the battle.
No doubt, on the Day of Judgment, God will ask about the blessings He bestowed upon us and will ask, "How did you benefit from My favours upon you?", however, when nations face destruction in this world, people say to one another, "We were given such and such opportunity to progress, but we did not benefit from it", or, "We squandered such and such opportunity to progress."
Therefore, in this chapter [Surah al-Takathur] Allah the Almighty has taught us in very brief words the way nations are destroyed. If this is always borne in mind, then nations cannot face destruction.
(Tafsir-e-Kabir, Vol. 9, pp. 544-545)

THE TEST

BY SHAARIF AHMAD

Shaarif Ahmad is 18 years old and is a Waqif-e-Nau student from Canada. He is fluent in French and has been part of many exchange programmes in Canada, eventually leading him to travel to France. Shaarif was also fortunate enough to be part of the first Atfal trip to UK from Canada. As a Waqif-e-Nau, Shaarif hopes to serve the Jamaat and humanity as a doctor of medicine and homeopathy. His passions include nutrition, cooking and photography. He is also very passionate about children, especially ones with disabilities and aspires to conduct research in the domain of child psychology. Shaarif has been writing poems since he was little.

The test has only begun

It is time for sacrifice, focus and not fun

You have got lots of responsibilities ahead that you need to face head on and without fear

My fear is that you may not be ready when the time is near

You are nothing without your Lord God, you see

For He is the source of all happiness and fulfillment for you and me

Always remember that your bad habits are your spiritual death

So, go ahead, pick you poison if you wish a long life of fret

If not, tread on this path carefully

For you will have to work hard to reach your goals fully

You have to work hard for six to seven months without any results

But your belief in the unseen should be so strong that it removes all the halts

Slacken not, nor grieve, for Allah is with the patient ones

He always gives his strongest soldiers the strongest fights and believe me, there are not a tonne

Always remember to see the bigger picture

Keep moving and don't stay still like a fixture

You are a bright boy with unlimited potential

If you don't see it, then believe your Lord Who sees what you see not

And remember to keep your eyes open from the attacks of Satan and not get caught

Kufa Mosque in Iraq

HAZRAT IMAM ABU HANIFA

MALIK SAIF-UR-RAHMAN

Malik Saif-ur-Rahman Sahib, the author of the article given below, was a highly educated and established scholar of Islam, having studied and taught at famous Islamic institutes prior to accepting Islam Ahmadiyyat.
He devoted his life to the Ahmadiyya Jamaat in Islam and served in many capacities. In 1947, he was appointed as Mufti-e-Silsila and later, also served as the principal of Jamia Ahmadiyya Rabwah for ten years.
He is famous for his services to the Jamaat and notable works such as the compilation of *Hadiqatus-Salihin* and authoring *Tarikh Afkar-e-Islami,* which includes the article presented below

Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifa's[rh] full name was Numan bin Thabit bin Zuta, also known as Abu Hanifa. (There are disputes as to why he was known as Abu Hanifa. One narration suggests that as he lived a life of moderation and refrained from going to extremes, he was called Abu Hanifa. Some are of the view that as "hanifa" meant inkpot in Iraq and due to his services to fiqh, inkpots always surrounded him by his students, that is why he was known as Abu Hanifa.)
He was born in 80 AH in Kufa and when he was around 70 years of age, he passed away in Baghdad in the year 150 AH.
His family belonged to an illustrious and religiously influential lineage of Kabul (Afghanistan), which consisted of Zoroastrian priests of Kabul.
After the conquest of Kabul, Imam Abu Hanifa's grandfather, Zuta settled with his family in Kufa or came there after being captured. He accepted Islam and made friendship with Banu Teem bin Tha'libah.
It is said that Zuta had immense reverence for Hazrat Ali[ra]. He once made a drink called faluda, which the people of Kabul were experts in, and offered it to Hazrat Ali[ra]. He had a son named Thabit and requested Hazrat Ali[ra] to pray for his

successful life and blessed offspring.
Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] was tall, had a broad and friendly face, fair and wheat brown complexion, full beard, pleasant appearance and was overall a clean, holy person. He was always considered to be a content and patient person, full of wisdom and knowledge.
His grandfather, Zuta, came to Kufa and started a business of garments and excelled in it. This business eventually was bequeathed to Imam Abu Hanifa[rh]. He too possessed a great deal of expertise in this trade as he would partake in it along with his father, Thabit, from a very young age. Later, when this burden was placed on his shoulders, not only did he take care of the business, considering it his duty, but also gave it new heights.
A famous type of garment at the time was khaz and this very popular to customers. Khaz was made by combining silk and cotton. He installed weaving looms that could make this cloth and began trade with this cloth as a partnership. He established agencies in various cities, where he would send the product and earned profit. Due to his professionalism, other people would also invest in his business.
Once, he sent 170,000 dirhams to a youth and said, "This was given to me by your father, which he was not able to take back before his death." This incident has been recorded in history books.
When he passed away, he had about 50,000 investments from different people, which were returned after his demise. Nonetheless, Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] was very affluent and never experienced any financial problems.
Imam Abu Hanifa's knowledge
As has been mentioned above, from a very young age, he had developed a relationship with his familial profession and could not give due attention to the sciences prevalent at the time.
Once, when he was about 15 years old, whilst walking in a bazaar, he had the chance to meet the famous muhaddith [scholar of hadith] Hazrat Imam Sha'bi[rh]. During the course of the conversation, Hazrat Imam Sha'bi[rh] gauged that the child was intelligent and promising. Upon observing this, he advised Abu Hanifa[rh] that he should focus on acquiring knowledge.
Imam Sha'bi's[rh] advice had an impact on him and consequently, due to a natural inclination, he started looking at various educational institutes in Kufa.
Initially, he had an interest in the subject of kalam [argumentation on the basis of Islamic scholastic theology], due to which he visited Basra, the capital of kalam at the time. However, having studied the subject for some time, he realised that deliberation and absorption in the subject could make a person quarrelsome and argumentative. After observing it as a science whose arguments were completely useless, inconsequential and negative for a person's outward demeanour, he shunned it. However, the thirst for knowledge that had now been ignited did not permit him to sit idly.
He assessed various institutes of fiqh [Islamic jurisprudence] as this science too was popular at the time. The sermons of Hazrat Hamaad[rh] bin Abi Sulaiman appealed to him. Hamaad[rh] was a scholar of hadith traditions and narrators and was a famous scholar and jurist of his time in Kufa. Thus, Abu Hanifa[rh] formed an attachment with his madrasah [institute] and embarked on a journey of studying fiqh.
The relationship between student and teacher became a fountain of knowledge and their bond strengthened into a loving friendship.
Hazrat Hamaad[rh] was a student of Imam Ibrahim al-Nakhai and al-Nakhai, through Alqama [ibn Qays], had the honour of indirectly studying from Hazrat Abdullah[ra] bin Masud. Hazrat Ibn Masud[ra] was sent by Hazrat Umar[ra] to Kufa to acquire knowledge of Islam. Imam Ibrahim al-Nakhai also derived benefit from Hazrat Ali[ra].
In this manner, Imam Abu Hanifa's[rh] acquisition of knowledge was linked with such a prestigious ijtihad [hermeneutics] promoting madrasah that was an authority in the fields of traditions, narrators, nass [sources of ruling] and tafaqquh [grasping the meaning and gaining insight].
Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] spent around 18 years seeking knowledge. Alongside that, he oversaw matters related to his business. Due to having such business partners who were professional and conscientious, his business remained afloat and he did not allow his studies to affect his business in any way.

Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] as a teacher

After acquiring knowledge, he began teaching. At the time, mosques would serve as schools also. Therefore, he too preferred the mosque as his

place to teach and used part of the central mosque of Kufa to teach, which gradually excelled to such a level that it was counted among the foremost schools of the time.
His weekly schedule, in terms of division of duties, consisted of the following:
Saturdays were dedicated to house-related work and overseeing his properties. On this day, he did not give any attention to his business, nor did he occupy himself with his teaching responsibilities
Every Friday, aside from worshipping Allah, he would offer a feast for his friends and prominent students and would spend the day meeting and conversing with them
On other days, he would attend to his teaching obligations and business-related affairs. During these working days, he would divide his day into three parts: In the first part, after saying his prayers, he would perform house chores; after midday, he would go to the bazaar and oversee his business, where he would give instructions to workers and inspect the profit and loss of the business; in the afternoon, he would eat, rest and following the Asr prayer at the mosque, start teaching
His madrasah was no ordinary one. He would have students of various aptitudes; some were specialists in linguistics, while others were experts in hadith, history, tafaqquh, qiyas [deductive analogy] and sociology. In this manner, his madrasah was a hub for people of different specialities.
Students had permission to ask any question and partake in discussions. Every statement, even if it was the statement of a lecturer, would be scrutinised. Eventually, after much deliberation, when issues were solved, they would be noted down and a ruling would be made, sealing the discussion. Discourses like this would run into the night and the only recesses would be for Salat
Alongside his intellectual growth, Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] was an extremely generous and philanthropic saint. Alongside his affluency, he was also openhanded in giving in the way of Allah. He would spend a great deal of money on his students and always took their welfare upon himself.
Imam Abu Yusuf's[rh] father was an extremely destitute and impoverished labourer. He once said to his son, "Instead of attending Abu Hanifa's classes, you should work so that we can have some money to run the house." Therefore, upon his father's persistence, he withdrew himself from the lessons and began work as a tailor.

Abu Hanifa Mosque 1950

When Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] came to learn of this, he called Abu Yusuf[rh] and enquired from him about his circumstances. He then assigned a reasonable allowance for him and from then on, always looked after him.
For other students too, he adopted the same means. It was his desire for intelligent students to not waste their intellect due to poverty and not to deprive themselves of the wealth of knowledge. The students at Imam Abu Hanifa's[rh] madrasah would later be positioned at extraordinary ranks and served as shining stars in their respective fields.
In this manner, the Almighty Allah had bestowed Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] with knowledge and wealth and the best of both the religious and secular worlds. He was never closefisted in spreading his knowledge and sharing his wealth.
A business partner, Hafs, was very intelligent. He worked with Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] for around 30 years. Once, he said:
"I have spent time with many scholars, fiqh experts, judges, pious people and tradesmen, but never

have I seen a saint full of qualities as was Imam Abu Hanifa[rh]. He possessed all the qualities and attributes that people possessed separately."

Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] and governance

Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] witnessed both the Umayyad and Abbasid dynasties. Around 52 years of his life were spent under the Umayyad rule, while 18 years were spent under the Abbasids. He saw the period of Umayyad influence and eventually its dissolution too.

He disliked the method of governance used by both dynasties. He was beyond any desires as such, however he desired for the pious members of the Holy Prophet's[sa] progeny to come into power. Despite this desire, he never resorted to rebellion and never attempted to topple the government.

He was of the view that one should help a government in their good works. He was always a well-wisher for others and tried to advise them for their betterment. He would say that rebellion was a form of disorder and that the blood shed in this act was even worse than the individual cases of wrongdoings of those in authority. Therefore, he would always discourage rebellion as a means of seeing improvement.

The Umayyads tried to gain his support and did their utmost in getting him to work in their favour, however he never accepted any official position.

In the time of the Abbasids, he was pressured into accepting the title of a jurist under their government, however he never accepted the request. The government would ask for the cooperation of scholars at the time as the masses, following the example of scholars, would become obedient. Yet it was not the policy of the government for such scholars to play any role in governance as this would be akin to sympathising with the wrongdoings of the government, and religious scholars would abstain from giving such an impression and were never prepared to take up a role in governance.

Once, the Abbasid Khalifa, Abu Jafar Mansur said to Imam Abu Hanifa[rh], "Why do you not accept a post in the judiciary?" He replied, "I do not consider myself worthy of this post." Mansur, somewhat furiously, said, "You are lying! You are completely fit for this role." Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] very respectfully responded, "The matter has been settled by Amirul Momineen. If I am lying, as Amirul Momineen suggests, then a liar is not fit to be a qazi [judge]." Upon hearing this prompt reply, Mansur was left dumbfounded and was unable to say anything else.

At another occasion, Abu Jafar said angrily, "Neither do you accept any post in my government, nor do you accept any gifts I send for you. This shows that you are opposed to this government!" Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] replied:

"That is not the case. I cannot bear the responsibility of the judiciary. The gifts sent from Amirul Momineen are not sent from his personal money, but from the treasury, for which I am not worthy as I am neither a soldier, nor do I belong to the offspring of a soldier, nor am I needy. Only these people deserve money from the treasury. When I am not worthy of this money, then how can I accept these gifts?"

Upon this, Mansur responded, "You can take this money and distribute it between the poor." He replied, "Amirul Momineen's wealth is far greater than this humble one's. You are far more qualified to ascertain who is needy and who is rich. Thus, your distribution would be much better suited."

He tolerated many difficult circumstances, suffered the cruelty of caliphs and leaders, endured lashings, spent many long periods imprisoned, departed Kufa and settled in Mecca, yet he never accepted any official governmental post, nor did he accept any gifts.

At one instance, he explained the reason behind not accepting any post himself. The governor of Kufa under the Umayyad rule, Ibn Hubayra once asked him to accept a position in the judiciary so that he may be an authority of the government. If he declined, he said that no ruling made by him would be deemed credible. To this, Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] replied:

هُوَ يُرِيْدُ مِنِّيْ اَنْ يَّكْتُبَ دَمَ رَجُلٍ يَضْرِبُ عُنُقَهُ وَاَخْتِمُ اَنَا عَلٰى ذَالِكَ الْكِتَابِ فَوَاللهِ لَا اَدْخُلُ فِيْ ذَالِكَ اَبَدًا

meaning that Ibn Hubayra's purpose was to demand the murder of a person and then have Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] legitimise it, however this would never happen.

Concerning the persistence of Abu Jafar Mansur, he said:

لا يصلح للقضاء الا رجل يكون له نفس يحكم بها عليك و على ولدك و قوادك و ليست تلك النفس لی

"A judge should be so courageous as to call a

ruling against you, your children or the chiefs of an army without any hesitation, however I am not such."

The reality is that Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] wanted to dedicate his time for the study and spread of knowledge and practice. Other imams of fiqh were also of the thought that instead of accepting any official governmental position, they should try to teach knowledge and practice to those who had accepted government posts so that they may serve the public in a much better way. It was for this reason that those who studied from such imams of fiqh later accepted high official positions and through their knowledge and justice, served their countrymen and through their guidance, attained eternal fame.

Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] once gathered his students, among whom were well renowned students who numbered 40. Whilst speaking to them, he said, "I have performed your intellectual and practical tarbiyat [edification] in a manner that has enabled you to take on responsibilities and contain the powerful government. Now you can walk steadily and firmly on the principles of integrity."

In this manner, Allah the Almighty blessed his efforts and fulfilled his desires. His students attained high ranks and proved to be worthy of those ranks – history bears testimony to their achievements.

Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifa's[rh] approach to fiqh was that he would primarily focus on the Holy Quran, seeking guidance from it. If full clarity was not provided by the Quran, he would then focus his attention on the established Sunnah [practice of the Holy Prophetsa]. If there was no clear explanation in the Sunnah, then he would pursue the practice of the majority of the Companions[ra]. If the matter in question could not be solved from their collective example, then he would select such sayings of the Companions[ra] that would be the closest in meaning and interpretation to the Holy Quran and established Sunnah. Thereafter, he would pursue other sources of knowledge, for example qiyas, istihsan [make a ruling different from that on which similar cases have been decided on the basis of precedent] and urf [custom] etc. from which he could make a ruling.

Whilst studying and compiling fiqh, he bore in mind the aforementioned principles and encouraged his students to do the same.

He would always say that he had proven matters from the aforementioned sources and that if anyone could prove and interpret it in a more suitable manner, then he would accept their deduction and would not be adamant to have his ruling accepted.

If ever he rejected a tradition or it was ignored, it was either because the tradition was not authentic enough in his view or he knew of a stronger one or that such a tradition did not come to his knowledge. Traditions were collated much later on and gradually, they suffered changes, as has been discussed previously in the chapter concerning Sunnah and Hadith [in the book Tarikh Afkar-e-Islami].

During his time, due to various reasons, the tendency to fabricate ahadith had increased and for this reason, he felt compelled to take extra care when extracting traditions.

Whilst working on his fiqh, Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] acquired another novel approach, which was that he thought up all possible social questions of the time and answered them in light of the Holy Quran, ahadith and the principles of deduction, thereby compiling them as questions and answers to assist other scholars. In this manner, through his guidance and with the efforts of his students, a treasure trove of fiqh concerning possible questions and scenarios was compiled.

This manner of compilation was not liked by other scholars and imams; his approach was challenged and sternly criticised. Their view was that when an incident is learnt of and one is practically faced with it, only then should it be solved and answered. To raise hypothetical questions or suggest potential scenarios and then seek answers for them was, in their view, a bid'at[innovation in the teachings of Islam] and a means of causing harm. However, Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] would say to this that this was all done with the purest intentions, for the promulgation of knowledge and to polish the human intellect.

After him, almost all of his students utilised this method for their extraordinary works in fiqh. Sahnun's Al-Mudawwana – a Maliki fiqh book containing 36,000 solutions to matters, Al-Mukhtasar al-Kabir li-ibn Abdil Hakam, Ibn Qudamah's Al-Mughni and Al-Muhalla by Ibn Hazm are perfect examples of this and treasure troves of

Islamic jurisprudence.

Compilation of books

Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] never wrote any book himself. Some journals are attributed to him, for instance Al-Fiqh-ul-Akbar, which was on doctrine and Kitab-ul-Alim wal-Muta'allim, which was on the etiquette of gaining knowledge. There is a letter that he wrote to a famous scholar of the time, Uthman al-Laythi explaining the issue of irja [postponement of an edict].

Two of his students preserved his fiqh-related views. Both these students are famous by the term, "Sahibain" [the two gentlemen]. One of them was Hazrat Imam Yaqub bin Habib al-Ansari, who is famous by the appellation of Abu Yusuf. The other was Hazrat Imam Muhammad bin Hasan al-Shaybani.

Imam Abu Yusuf was the qazi al-quzat [chief jurist] in the time of Harun al-Rashid, which was a respectable post under the Abbasid rule. He was the first to be given this post and was famous by the appellation of qazi al-quzat.

During the Abbasid reign, he appointed qazis [jurists] mostly belonging to the Hanafi mazhab [order], due to which the entire government was highly influenced by the Hanafi beliefs. Imam Ibn Hazm al-Andalusi would often say that two mazhabs of fiqh had influenced the policies of governments: the Hanafites had gained ascendency during the Abbasid reign and the Maliki order was popular under the Caliphate of Cordoba.

At one point, when the Ayyubid dynasty was dominant in Egypt and Syria and Sultan Mahmud Sabuktigini [Mahmud of Ghazni] ruled over Ma Wara al-Nahr [Transoxiana], the Shafi'is held the same position and were considered the state religion.

Hazrat Imam Abu Yusuf was a prolific writer. His work, Kitab-ul-Khiraj gained much acclaim. Similarly, his second book, Al-Athar, and pamphlets, Ikhtilaf ibn Abi Layla and Al-Raddu Ala Siyaril-Auza'i were also famous.

Imam Abu Yusuf passed away in 183 AH. He left behind a lot of wealth. His will said that 100,000 dirhams should be distributed respectively among the needy and deserving in Mecca, Medina, Baghdad and in Kufa – the city where he spent his childhood, acquired knowledge and was given great respect in spite of being the son of a poor tailor.

The other worthy student of Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] was Imam Muhammad bin Hasan al-Shaybani, who also served as a jurist, but whose nature was inclined more towards preparing literature. It is for this reason that he is considered the biggest compiler of Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifa's[rh] views.

Imam Muhammad bin Hasan was born in 132 AH. He belonged to a prosperous family. He passed away in 189 AH.

He was a student of Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] for around three years. At the time, he was very young, yet Abu Hanifa[rh] remained vigilant about the educational and moral wellbeing of this young child and would sit him beside him during lessons. That is why he is also famous by the term, "Tarafain", i.e. he who sits beside the teacher.

When Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] passed away in 150 AH, he completed his education studying from Imam Abu Yusuf and also studied for three years under Hazrat Imam Malik[rh].

There are various copies of Hazrat Imam Malik's[rh] compilation of traditions, which is famous by the name, Al-Muwatta. Two such copies are popular; one is called Muwatta Imam Malik, which was narrated by Yahya bin Yahya al-Laythi, while the other is Muwatta Imam Muhammad, as narrated by Muhammad bin Hasan al-Shaybani.

Imam Muhammad bin Hasan al-Shaybani authored many voluminous books, most of which is based on the Hanafi school of thought. Among these books, the following are famous:

Kitab al-Mabsut, Kitab al-Ziyadat, Al-Jamey' al-Saghir, Al-Jamey' al-Kabir, Al-Siyar al-Saghir and Al-Siyar al-Kabir. These six books are famous by the name of Zahir al-Riwayat.

Two other books of his are also deemed to be of the same calibre: one is called Al-Rad ala Ahlil-Medina, while the other is Kitab al-Athar. Muwatta Imam Muhammad is also very famous.

Many other students of Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] were positioned at key posts and were no less in the field of knowledge.

Imam Zufar, Daud Tai, Hasab bin Ziyad and Abdullah bin al-Mubarak were all saints of their age. Due to his students, Imam Abu Hanifa's[rh] fiqh-related views were widely circulated. A heavy portion of the Muslim population living in Iraq,

Syria, Egypt, Turkistan, Afghanistan and Hindustan associate with the Hanafi order. His followers can be found in other Muslim countries also. The Ottoman reign of the Turks was based on the Hanafi school of thought and due to the Turks, the Hanafi order was spread widely.

Beautiful aspects of the life of Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifa[rh]

Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] would adopt a beautiful approach when addressing contentious matters. He would try his utmost to clear the matter, without hurting anyone's sentiments.

He once presented a beautiful example regarding this. He said:
"If four people dispute about a white coloured sheet – one saying that it is red, the other saying that it is black, another calling it green and the last one, who knows that the actual colour is white – and remain adamant on their stance, then the person who knows the true colour should not say to the others, 'You are wrong', but rather should say, 'As far as I am aware, the colour is white.'"
Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] was very clean. He would wear clean, presentable clothes and would desire the same for others.
Once, some scholars arrived to meet him, of whom one wore old, dirty, torn and tattered clothes. After their meeting, when they got up to leave, Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] asked the gentleman with torn clothes to stay behind. When the others had left, he gave 1,000 dirhams to the gentleman to purchase new, decent clothes. The man replied, "I am a wealthy person. I do not need such financial help." Abu Hanifa replied, "When God has given you wealth and has made you affluent, then you should be thankful to Him for this blessing upon you. There should be a practical display of this blessing upon you. It is thanklessness to wear such torn and tattered and unclean clothes. It goes against the verse:

وَاَمَّا بِنِعۡمَتِ رَبِّكَ فَحَدِّثۡ

['And as for the bounty of your Lord, do relate it (to others)' (Surah al-Duha, Ch.93: V.12).] It goes against the hadith that says that there should be a practical display of God's beneficence."
Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] was a great neighbour and had the great quality of solving disputes and quarrels.

A neighbour of his was a dissolute alcoholic and would create a lot of disturbance. During the nights, his alcoholic friends would gather at his home, where dancing, drinking and many acts that disturbed the environment would take place. This was somewhat unsettling for Imam Abu Hanifa[rh], however, due to the guidance about treating neighbours with kindness, he did not consider it suitable to file a complaint against him.
One night, the area's chief of police was walking past, when he heard the disturbance from the man's house. When he approached the house to enquire about the disturbance, he ended up arresting them all and putting them in jail.
The following day, when Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] came to learn of this, he met with the governor of the city and gave him the guarantee of treating his neighbour kindly. With that, the prisoner was freed and Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] brought him home.
Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] said to him, "You would often recite a couplet saying that a neighbour should be such who helps in times of difficulty. So, what sort of a neighbour have you found me to be?"
The following couplet could often be heard being sung from his house:

اَضَاعُوۡنِیۡ وَاَیَّ فَتًی اَضَاعُوۡا
لِیَوۡمِ کَرِیۡهَةٍ وَّ سِدَادِ ثَغۡرِ

After freeing his neighbour, Abu Hanifa[rh] jokingly asked him:

هَلۡ اَضَعۡنَاكَ

The neighbour was so overwhelmed by the treatment of Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] that he ceased such activity and started to live a peace-loving, pious and sincere life.
Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] was a steadfast and intelligent person who would resolve conflicts. He would respond to harsh words in such a way that would leave the other feeling ashamed, yet wanting to correct their way.
Due to fiqh-related disputes, scholars would use harsh words for him and the ignorant followers of such scholars would take this anger to extremes. However, whenever people would observe his patience and fortitude, they would be forced to change their views.
Once, a person called him an innovator and disbeliever. In response, Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] replied, "May Allah forgive you. I am not what you

claim I am. Ever since I accepted Islam and Allah bestowed spiritual wisdom upon me, I hold fast only to Him. I neither consider anything parallel to Allah, nor do I deify anything. Is this what a disbeliever is?"

Upon hearing this response, the man felt embarrassed and sought forgiveness. Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] said, "When a person commits a mistake unknowingly, upon repenting, Allah forgives them."

Once, Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] was sitting in a mosque when a person following an opposing scholar came and started hurling abuse at him. Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] remained quiet throughout his abuse, but that person increased in his verbal abuse. When Abu Hanifa[rh] got up to leave, that person started to follow him and continued his verbal assault.

When he eventually reached his home, he turned to the man and said, "This is my home. I must go inside. If anything remains, please express it now. Otherwise, do not say later on that you still have a desire to continue."

Upon hearing this reply, the man felt ashamed and repented from his actions.

During the time of the Umayyads, Kufa's governor, Ibn Hubayra and the second Caliph of the Abbasid reign, Abu Jafar Mansur tried their utmost to have Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] accept the role of chief judge, however he would always reject the offer. Both these rulers were harsh towards him during their periods of rule, at times lashing and imprisoning him. Abu Hanifa[rh] bore this time with immense forbearance, however he disliked any wrongdoings.

Once, his mother said quite anxiously to him, "Son, what has this knowledge brought you? Troubles and lashings?" He replied to his mother:

يَا اُمَّاهُ يُرِيْدُوْنَنِى عَلَى الدُّنْيَا وَاِنِّىْ اُرِيْدُ الْآخِرَةَ وَاِنِّىْ اَخْتَارُ عَذَابَهُمْ عَلَى عَذَابِ اللهِ

"My dear mother, these people present the world, yet I yearn for the Hereafter. I bear the pain they extend so that I may be saved from Allah's punishment."

Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] was a very balanced, moderate and God-fearing saint.

Once, while scholars had gathered to meet the ruler of the city, a debate started on a certain issue. Everyone gave their opinion and Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] also presented his view. Among them was a scholar, Hasan bin Ammara; when he presented his stance, Abu Hanifa[rh] responded, "This view seems more accurate. We were all thinking along the wrong track." After hearing this, Hasan bin Ammara replied, "If Abu Hanifa wanted, he could have remained adamant on his stance, but due to his taqwa, he accepted the truth."

Once, a sanction was placed against him by the government that prohibited him from making a fatwa [ruling] on any issue or addressing any issue. While at home, his son, Hamaad enquired about a certain matter, to which he replied, "The government has prohibited me from giving my view on any religious matter. If anyone from the government asks whether I issued any ruling, then how will I reply?"

As far as possible, Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] maintained friendly and sincere relations with contemporary scholars. He had great respect for Hazrat Imam Malik[rh]. Whenever he would meet him, they would share views on different religious issues. He had the same sort of relationship with other moderate scholars.

Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] had a very content and satisfied disposition. Once, when a wife of Abu Jafar Mansur enquired of a religious matter from him, the reply Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] gave was so pleasing to her that she sent 50,000 dirhams, a concubine and a horse as a gift for him. He replied that his fatwa was not given in the lust of any reward and that whatever truth he knew, he had mentioned it. Thus, he returned the gift with thanks.

Imam Abu Hanifa's[rh] astuteness to critical questions

His style of rejoinder was very unique. Even in the most complicated circumstances, he would reply in such a fashion that all onlookers would be left amazed.

The fitna [unrest] of the Kharijites was in full swing during his lifetime. These people were usually ill-mannered and always ready to create disorder. Once, a group of Kharijites stormed into the main mosque of Kufa whilst Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] was teaching his class. He instructed everyone not to fret and remain calm. When the head of the group arrived, he asked everyone sternly, "Who are you people?" Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] promptly replied:

نَحْنُ مُسْتَجِيْرُوْنَ

"We are refugees." The Kharijites assumed that he was referring to the verse of the Holy Quran that

mentions giving refuge to the idolater who wishes to seek refuge whilst listening to the Quran so that they may listen to God's word and then to shift them to a place of rest i.e. their homes.
Nonetheless, the leader said to his men to recite the Quran to them and then to return them safely to their homes.
Through his astute wisdom, not only was the life of everyone saved, but they were taken home safely.
Once, the Kharijites turned up all of a sudden. The leader of the Kharijites, Dahhak bin Qays said to Imam Abu Hanifa[rh], "If you are in favour of tahkim [the incident of a mediator being appointed between Ali[ra] and Muawiyyahra] then you should repent, otherwise we shall be forced to kill you." Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] replied, "Do you wish to use force or will you listen to reason?" He replied, "If you have any reason, then of course, do present it." Abu Hanifa said, "Who can decide whether this argument is correct or not?" He replied, "We can assign a mediator", to which Imam Sahib[rh] replied, "Okay, fine. We shall accept [so and so] from your party as a mediator." Dahhak agreed and asked Imam Abu Hanifa to present his arguments. He astutely and immediately responded, "What can be more of an argument than the fact that you have yourself accepted the option of mediation; this is called tahkim." Dahhak was immediately dumbfounded and could not utter anything else.
Once, a group of Kharijites came to visit Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] with swords in their hands. They were of the belief that a person who had committed atrocious sins would be summoned to the hellfire for eternity. Therefore, they said to Imam Abu Hanifa[rh], "We have two questions only. Answer them, otherwise we shall kill you." He responded, "What are the questions?"
They said, "The first question is that if a person consumes a lot of alcohol and dies whilst drunk, or if a woman commits adultery and gets pregnant as a result and dies whilst pregnant with that child, tell us, will they both be considered Muslims?"
Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] replied, "Were they Jewish?" They replied in the negative. "Were they Christians?" They replied negatively. "Were they Zoroastrian?" They again replied in the negative. He then asked, "Then what religion did they belong to?" They replied, "They were Muslims." Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] immediately replied:

قَدْ اَجَبْتُمْ

"You have yourself answered the question." This shows that he considered anyone a Muslim who called themselves a Muslim.
Feeling somewhat embarrassed, they said, "Alright, then tell us, are they hell bound, or can they enter paradise?" Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] replied, "My answer is that which Abraham[as] and Jesus[as] gave. Abraham[as] said:

فَمَنْ تَبِعَنِيْ فَاِنَّهٗ مِنِّيْ ۚ وَ مَنْ عَصَانِيْ فَاِنَّكَ غَفُوْرٌ رَّحِيْمٌ

"'So whoever follows me, he is certainly of me; and whoever disobeys me – Thou art, surely, Most Forgiving, Merciful.' (Surah Ibrahim, Ch.14: V.37)
Jesus[as], the Messiah, said:

اِنْ تُعَذِّبْهُمْ فَاِنَّهُمْ عِبَادُكَ ۚ وَ اِنْ تَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ فَاِنَّكَ اَنْتَ الْعَزِيْزُ الْحَكِيْمُ

"'If Thou punish them, they are Thy servants; and if Thou forgive them, Thou surely art the Mighty, the Wise.'" (Surah al-Maidah, Ch.5: V.119)
Upon hearing this response, they felt ashamed and went on their way.
Once, Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] visited the court of Abu Jafar Mansur where an official of Mansur, Abul Abbas Tusi, who held animosity against Abu Hanifa[rh], was also seated. Abul Abbas Tusi found an opportunity to create mischief and intended to have him punished by any means necessary. In front of Mansur, he asked Imam Abu Hanifa[rh], "If Amirul Momineen calls someone and orders him to smite another person's neck while they are unaware of their crime, should such a person follow such orders?"
Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] realised the mischief and asked, "In your view, does Amirul Momineen issue commands with justice and integrity, or are his orders unjust and without reason, bearing a thirst for the blood of others?" Abul Abbas Tusi immediately felt uneasy and abruptly answered, "Amirul Momineen's decision is just", to which Imam Sahib[rh] replied, "A just order should be obeyed."
A person once made a will for Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] in his absence. According to the law, his property was handed to the court. When Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] finally arrived, he filed a lawsuit and explained the circumstances. The witnesses attested to the fact that the will was, in fact, in Abu Hanifa's[rh] name. Upon hearing this, the adjudicator said to Imam Sahib[rh], "Can you swear on oath that what the

witnesses are saying is the truth?" Imam Sahib[rh] replied, "How can I take an oath when I was not even present when the will was made?" to which the adjudicator responded, "Then you have lost this case."
Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] was very intelligent and so, when he assessed that the adjudicator was testing his intellect, he said to him, "If a blind man is beaten by someone and injured and witnesses attest that so and so was the one who beat the blind man and that they were present and saw it happen, would you require for the blind to take an oath that the witnesses are telling the truth?" Observing Imam Sahib's[rh] intelligence and astuteness, the adjudicator was left stunned and called a decision in favour of Imam Sahib[rh].
A mentally challenged lady would often walk the bazaars of Kufa. Once, someone harassed the lady, to which the lady became enraged and started hurling foul language, calling him "Ya ibnal-zaniyain" (son of two adulterers). This incident took place in the bazaar close to the main mosque and was witnessed by Kufa's qazi [judge], Ibn Abi Layla. He instructed for the woman to be arrested and sentenced her to twice the amount of the usual sentence of lashing.
When Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] came to learn of the injustice against the lady, he could not just sit by and observe. He criticised the sentencing and said that the qazi had made many blunders, for example:
1. The lady was insane and such people cannot be held accountable for their crimes and cannot be punished
2. The punishment was given inside the mosque, whereas the mosque is not a place for meting out punishments
3. When the lady had been punished, she was standing, even though women should be seated whilst being punished and cannot be punished whilst standing
4. By ascribing two crimes to the lady, the qazi issued two punishments, even though one punishment was enough. If a person falsely makes an accusation against an entire group of people, they would be punished once only and only that false accuser would be punished
5. The qazi issued both punishments together, even though the limits prescribed are that there should be a gap of a few days between such sentences so that the injuries sustained from first punishment can heal
6. Those who have been accused of being adulterers should also be present during sentencing and their refutation should be heard, rejecting any truth in the claim. It is apparent that in the case mentioned, this did not happen
The qazi, Ibn Abi Layla, complained to the governor of the city about Imam Abu Hanifa's[rh] criticism, saying that he had defamed the court. Thus, the governor issued sanctions upon Abu Hanifa[rh] that prevented him from issuing any fatwas or answering any theological question.
Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] considered it acceptable to criticise issues surrounding the Shariah. He would himself criticise and would welcome criticism.
Once, a qazi called Shurayk was presented with a question on what to do if a person was in doubt about whether they had divorced their wife or not. To this, Shurayk answered, "Such a person should divorce his wife and then do ruju' [seek to return to the wife] to remove any doubt."
Imam Thawri[rh] said that in such circumstances, divorce was not required as the husband's intention was equivalent to ruju'. Imam Zufar[rh] said that their Nikah was certain and that doubt was not more credible than certainty. Therefore, she would remain his wife as she was prior to the doubt.
When Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] heard of these views, he remarked that Imam Zufar's[rh] views were closest to the principles of fiqh, Imam Thawri's[rh] fatwa was based on taqwa, while Shurayk's suggestion was similar to a person, who says that they are in doubt about whether their clothes were contaminated with urine, being told to urinate on their clothes and then to wash them.
Shurayk was offended by Imam Abu Hanifa's[rh] strict criticism and never ceased in his spite for him.
A case was presented before Shurayk, the qazi, in which two witnesses were presented. One was Nazar bin Ismail, while the other was Imam Abu Hanifa's[rh] son, Hamaad. Both were noble scholars of fiqh and respectable members of society, however Shurayk rejected their testimonies.
Nazar was accused of being the imam of a certain mosque and accepting money for this responsibility, while Hamaad was accused of believing in false principles, alongside his father, who supposedly said that the level of faith of the evil and pious was the same.

During the course of raising accusations against Nazar, when Nazar replied, "You also take money whilst being a qazi", he replied by saying, "When I come as a witness in your court, feel free to reject my testimony." Shurayk would often say that the existence of the Hanafi school of thought was the misfortune of Islam.

Accusations against Imam Abu Hanifa[rh]

The governor of the city once required an intellectual thesis on a particular subject. Qazi Ibn Shibrima and Qazi Ibn Abi Layla exerted all efforts, yet they were not able to prepare the required thesis. When the matter was referred to Imam Abu Hanifa[rh], he prepared it in a very calculated and precise manner, which the governor highly appreciated, leading him to praise Abu Hanifa[rh]. When Ibn Abi Layla left the court of the governor, he said to his companion, Ibn Shibrima, "Did you see how this foolish and stupid person surpassed us?" Ibn Shibrima replied, "The real 'foolish and stupid person' is the one who was not able to formulate even a few lines on this subject and who is now furiously hurling insults at the scholar who was capable of it."

He would be at the receiving end of a lot of verbal abuse and accusations. Some would allege that he did know Arabic, while others said that his knowledge of hadith was not sound. He was accused of having ties with the Murji'ah sect, not accepting the importance of actions, being a Shiite, claiming to love the Ahl-e-Bait [close family of the Holy Prophet Muhammadsa] despite being a disbeliever or a Jew.

Thousands of accusations were levelled against him, but who bears the capacity to humble a person whom God desires to favour? Those who raised false accusations against him have been effaced and are not remembered today, whereas Imam Abu Hanifa[rh] and his students are venerated even today throughout the world.

Once, the chief jurist of the city, Imam Abu Yusuf was asked, "You have accomplished so much. Do you still have any unfulfilled desire?" He replied, "Firstly, to have the purity of Hazrat Musar bin Kudam and secondly, to be destined to become a great master of fiqh as was Abu Hanifa." Harun al-Rashid, upon hearing this response, said, "This is a desire even higher than that of Khilafat."

The greatness of Imam Abu Hanifa[rh]

Hazrat Imam Abu Hanifa Numan[rh] bin Thabit was a great scholar of fiqh. He was an exemplary imam, had a noble personality and was a saint of the highest order. The Muslim Ummah remembers him as "Al-Imam al-A'zam" [the Great Imam], a title he deservedly earned. He was bigger than all of the famous imams of fiqh, age-wise and otherwise. Everybody attested to his intellectual prowess.

He had the honour of initiating the compilation of fiqh. He was the teacher of such students who would go on to become great men and took great pride in being his students. His fiqh became known as an ocean of knowledge due to the stretch of principles and abundance of rulings.

Islamic governments of various eras adopted his fiqh to rule. As compared to other imams of fiqh, his following is much larger and it is for this reason that the Imam of the age, the Promised Messiah[as] praised him and said with respect to him:

"The fact is that the aforementioned Imam Sahib, in terms of his aptitude of ijtihad [hermeneutics], comprehension of hadith, understanding and wisdom was superior and greater than the other three imams [i.e. Hazrat Imam Malik[rh], Hazrat Imam Shafi'i[rh] and Hazrat Imam Ahmad[rh] bin Hanbal]. His God-given decision-making skills were so refined that he knew how to differentiate between evidence and lack of evidence. His reasoning skills had a special power to understand the Holy Quran and his nature had a deep familiarity with the word of God, elevating him to the highest stage of God-realisation. It is for this reason that in terms of ijtihad and deduction, he was accepted as the highest authority, something which the rest were unable to attain."

(Izala-e-Auham, Ruhani Khazain, Vol. 3, p. 385)

(Translated by Al Hakam from the original Urdu in Tarikh Afkar-e-Islami, written by Malik Saif-ur-Rahman Sahib)

I NEED YOU

(An announcement published by Hazrat Mirza Bashiruddin Mahmud Ahmad, Musleh-e-Maud, may Allah be pleased with him, in search of young Waqifeen)

1. Are you able to work hard, even up to 13 to 14 hours in a day?
2. Are you able to speak the truth and not lie under any circumstance, to the point that even the closest of friends cannot lie to you? If someone does falsely narrate their tales of bravery to you, can you express your utter disdain?
3. Are you free from a sense of false pride? Can you sweep the streets? Can you lift heavy weights? Can you lift heavy weights and wander the streets? Can you make every type of loud announcement in marketplaces? Can you travel for entire days and stay awake throughout the night?
4. Can you perform e'tikaf i.e. can you sit in one place for days or sit and recite prayers or refrain from talking to anyone for days?
5. Can you travel alone and bear your expenses without having any money in your pocket for yourself and live among enemies, opponents, strangers and unfamiliar people for days, weeks or months?
6. Do you believe that some men are above every type of defeat and do not like to hear the word "defeat"? Do you believe that such men are ready to carve their way through mountains and alter the flow of rivers? Do you think that you can prepare yourself to make such sacrifices?
7. Do you have enough strength to say "Yes" while the whole world says "No"; to observe everyone laughing around you, while you remain unshaken; to have someone chase after you and tell you, "Stop! We will kill you!" and you stop and say, "Go on!", while presenting your head to them; to not listen to anyone because people can lie, but you have everyone listen to you because you are truthful?
8. Can you refrain from saying, "I made every effort, but God prevented me from being successful", and instead, consider every failure to be of your own doing? Can you be certain that everyone who makes effort eventually succeeds and whoever is unsuccessful did not make any effort?

If you can answer the above affirmatively, then you have the capability of being a good missionary and businessman. But where are you? A man of God has been in need of you for a long time?

O Ahmadi youth! Find that person in your regions, in your cities, in your villages, in your households and in your hearts, for the tree of Islam is withering away. Only through such a person's blood can it be revived.

Mirza Mahmud Ahmad

(Al Fazl, 22 May 1948)

ALLAH

BY FAREED AHMED

Fareed Ahmed is only 6 years old and is a Waqif-e-Nau from London. His simple, yet beautiful poem that he wrote on his Creator is presented here for all readers

Allah has no partner; He is the only one;
He says, "Kun" and everything gets done.
Allah is the most Merciful, All-Knowing and Kind;
He knows what we do and what's in our mind.
The whole universe, He created without a flaw;
He is An-Nur, His light has Power and Awe.
Those who follow His orders, get His pleasure;
He blesses them from His never-ending treasure.